

# **Birds found within East County MSCP Study Area**

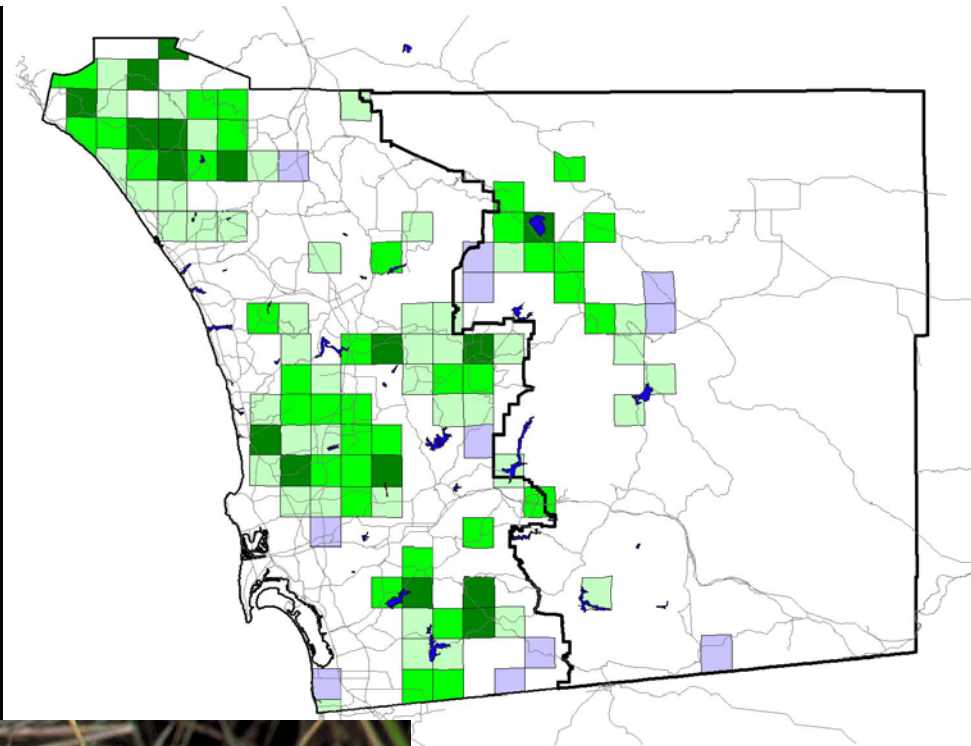
PowerPoint presentation by:

Phil Unitt, San Diego Natural History Museum

***Ammodramus savannarum perpallidus***  
**Grasshopper Sparrow**

Primary habitat in EC MSCP area  
is Warner Valley/Lake Henshaw  
basin (grassland, ideally with some  
native component).

Green: Breeding season  
Blue: Additional winter sites

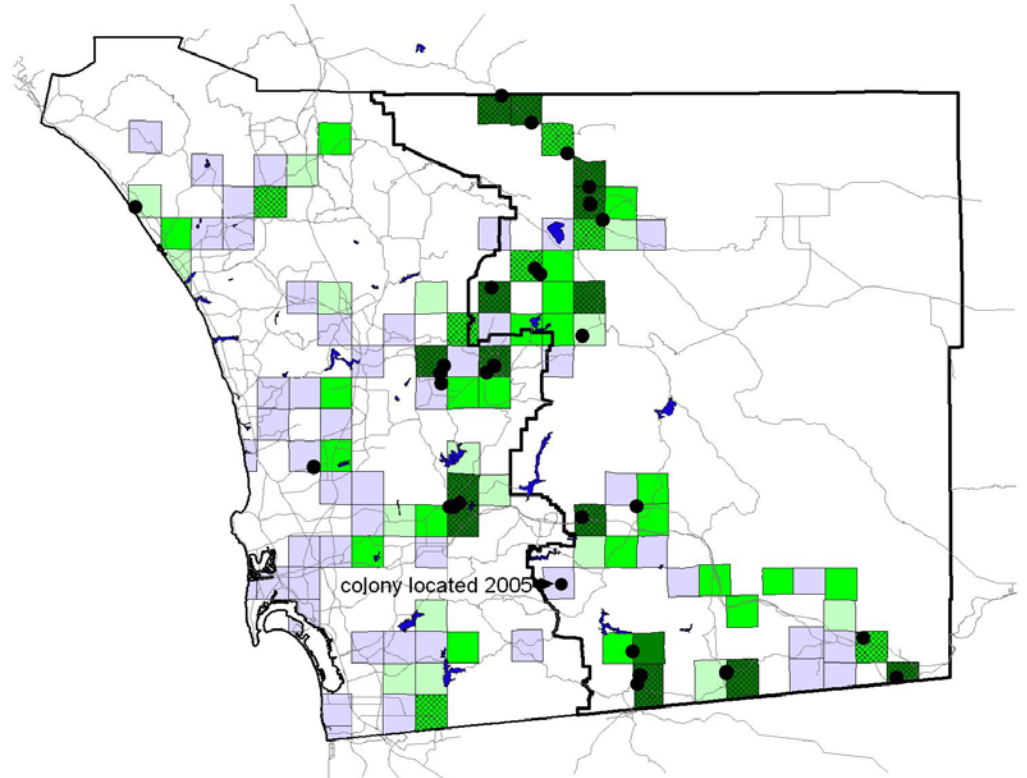




***Agelaius tricolor***  
**Tricolored Blackbird**

Nests colonially, usually in marshes,  
forages in surrounding grassland.  
East County MSCP is critical to species'  
survival in San Diego Co., if not all  
southern California.

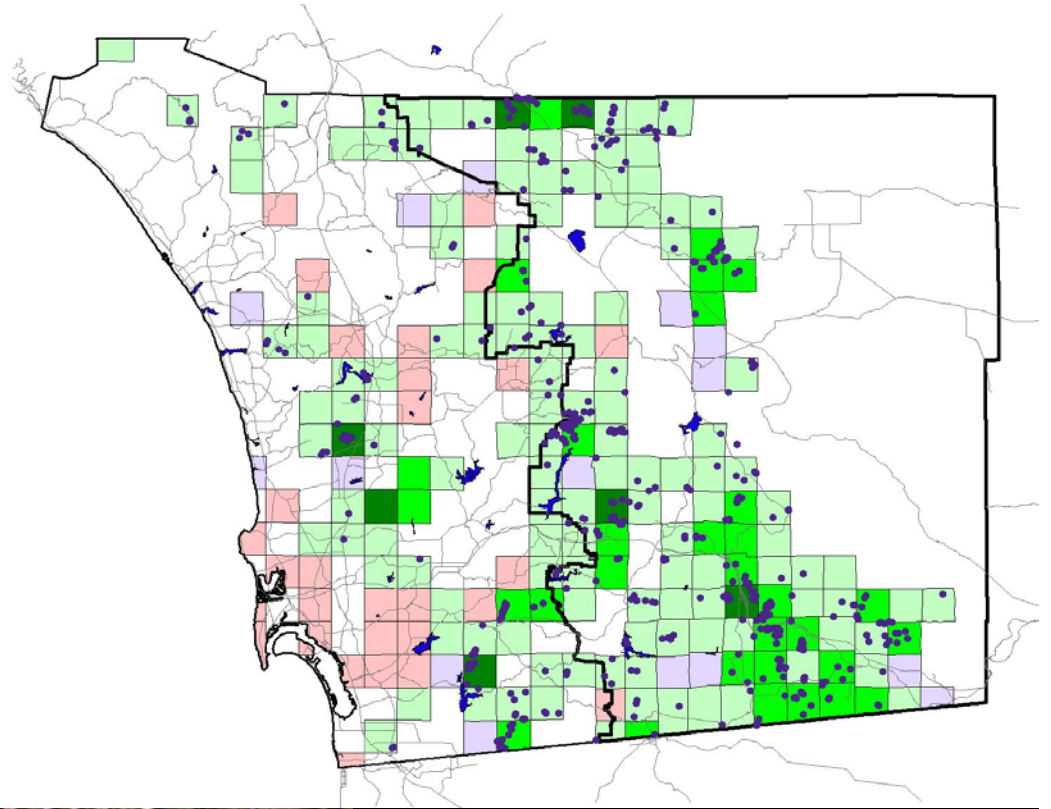
Green: Breeding season  
Blue: Additional winter localities  
Cross-hatching: Known colonies  
Points: Mapped locations





***Amphispiza belli belli***  
**Bell's Sage Sparrow**

Habitat semi-open chaparral.  
Highest known sensitivity to habitat  
fragmentation among San Diego birds.  
East county MSCP area is core habitat  
for the entire subspecies.



Green: Breeding season  
Blue: Additional winter locations  
Pink: Recorded only before  
1997  
Points: Mapped locations



## *Aquila chrysaetos canadensis*

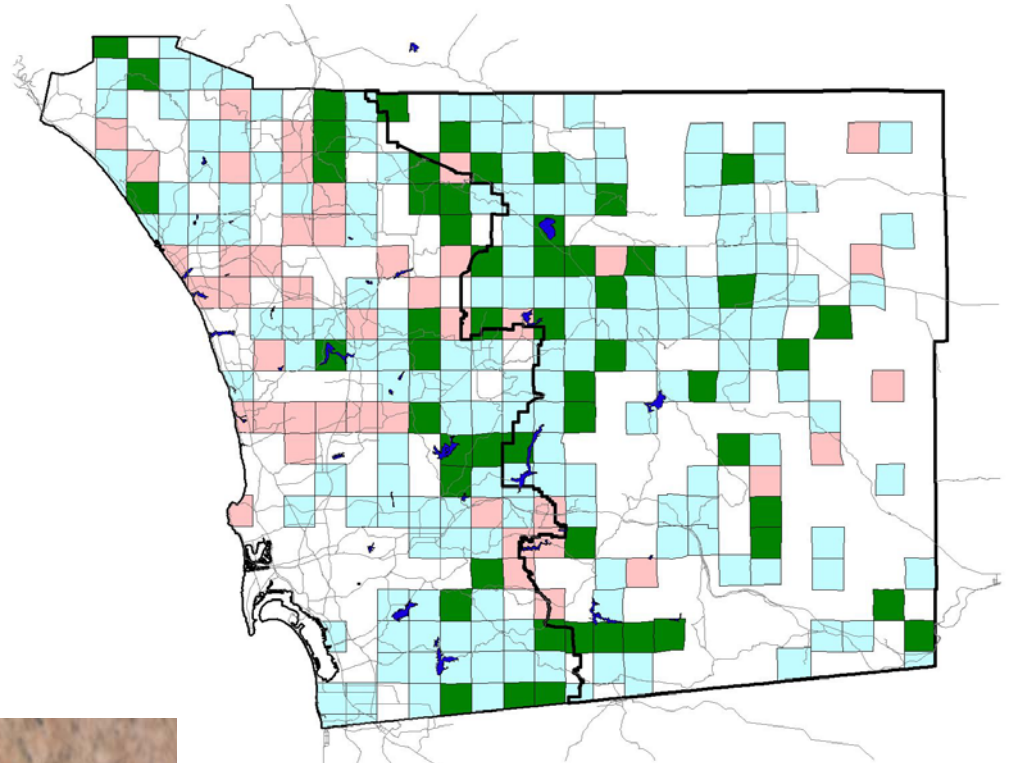
### Golden Eagle

Nests on cliffs or trees on slopes;  
foraging territory per pair averages  
36 mi.<sup>2</sup> About 60% of remaining  
county population in east county  
MSCP area.

Green: Nests active 1997–2001

Blue: Other sightings 1997-2001

Pink: Nesting before 1997



## *Asio otus wilsonianus*

## Long-eared Owl

Nests usually in woodland isolated from human disturbance. Highly dispersive in nonbreeding season. Status poorly known.

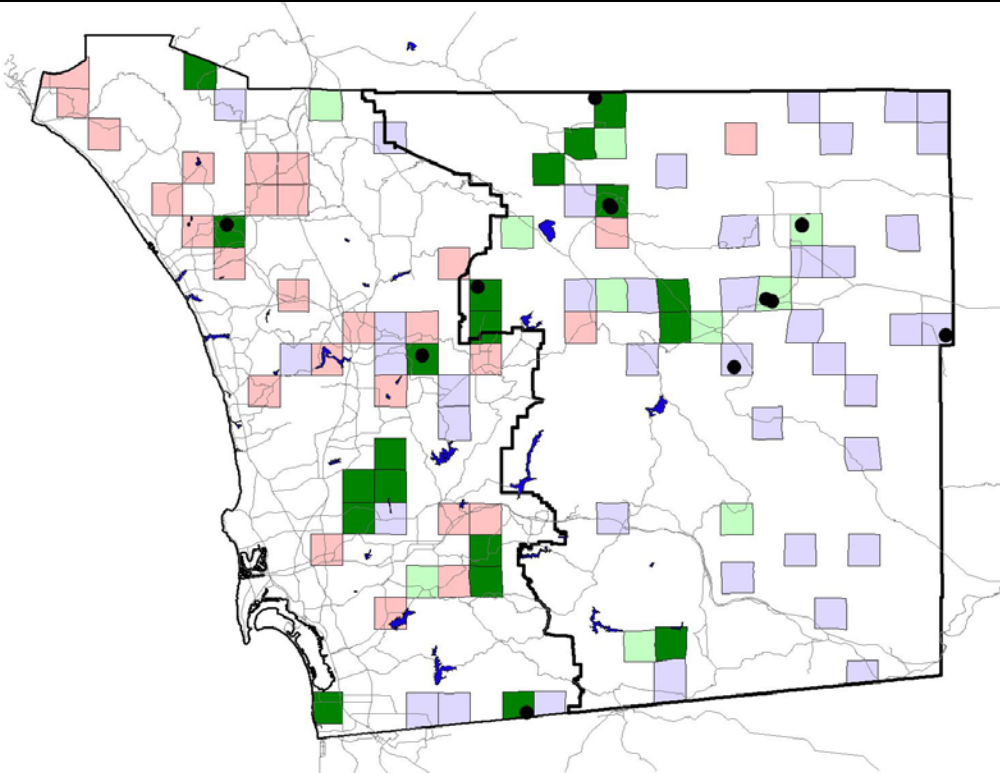
Dark green: Known nesting 1997–2001

Light green: Possible nesting 1997–2001

Blue: Migrants and winter visitors

Pink: Recorded only before 1997

Points: Mapped locations





## *Buteo regalis*

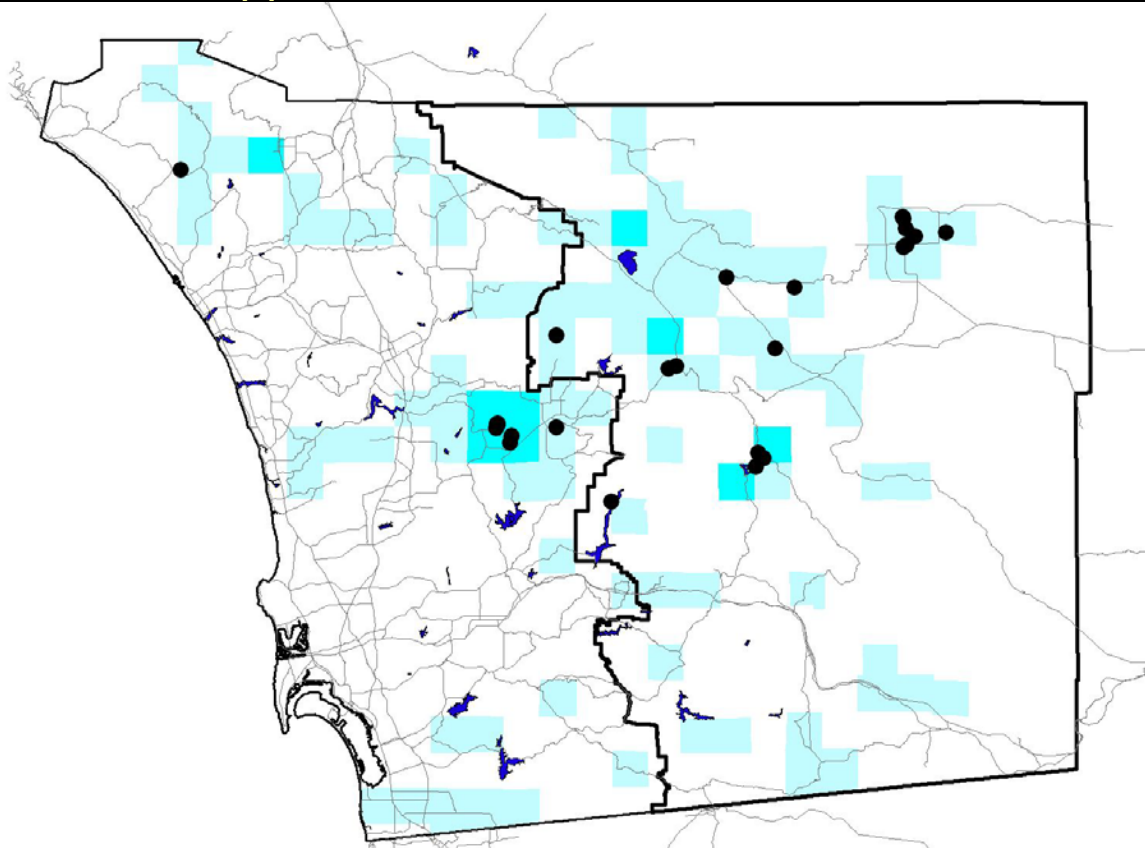
## Ferruginous Hawk

Winter visitor only: about 100 individuals in San Diego County per year, mainly in extensive grassland.

Principal habitats in east county MSCP area are Warner Valley, Borrego Valley, Santa Ysabel Valley, and Lake Cuyamaca.

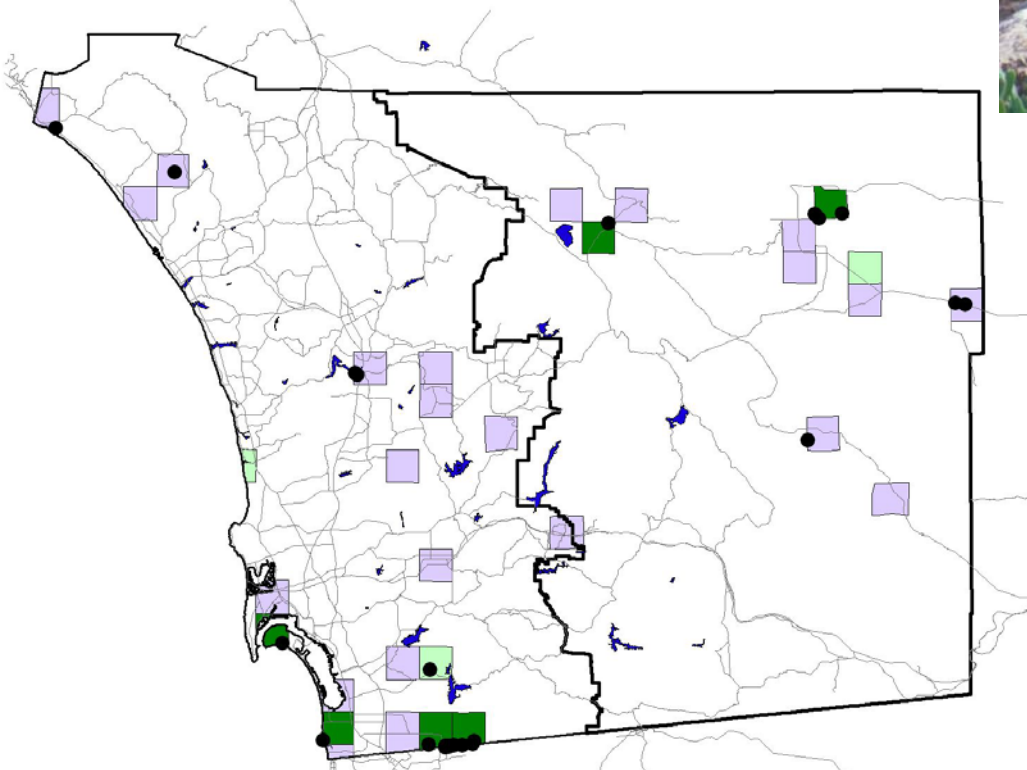
Blue: Winter records

Points: Mapped locations



## *Athene cunicularia hypugaea* Burrowing Owl

Warner and Borrego valleys only known nesting sites within east county MSCP area. Possibly already extirpated as a breeding species in both of these areas; exhaustive survey of Warner Valley needed to test this. Bad population dynamics over a broad region need to be understood if site-specific conservation measures are to be effective.



Dark green: Known nesting, 1997–2001

Light green: Possible nesting, 1997–2001

Blue: Migrants and winter visitors, 1997–2001

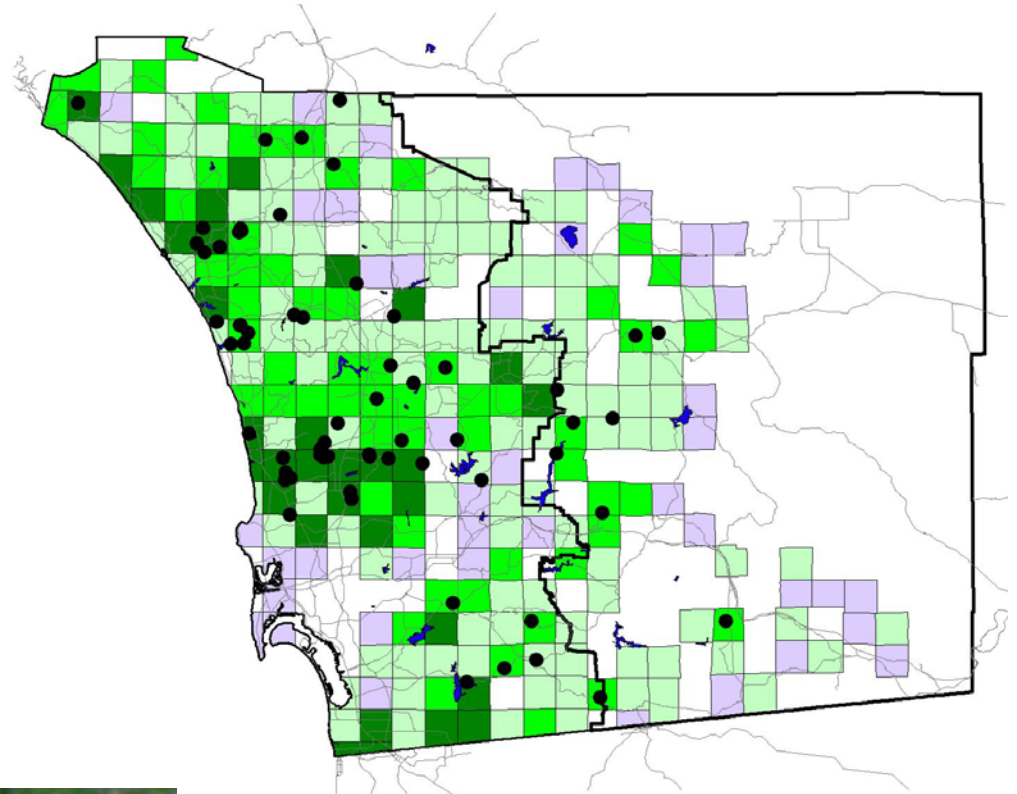
Points: Mapped locations



***Elanus leucurus majusculus***  
**White-tailed Kite**

Population in east county MSCP area relatively small in comparison to that in coastal lowland. Communal roosting and population fluctuations with rainfall and prey abundance complicate monitoring.

Green: Breeding season  
Blue: Winter or dispersal  
Points: Mapped nesting locations.



## *Empidonax traillii extimus*

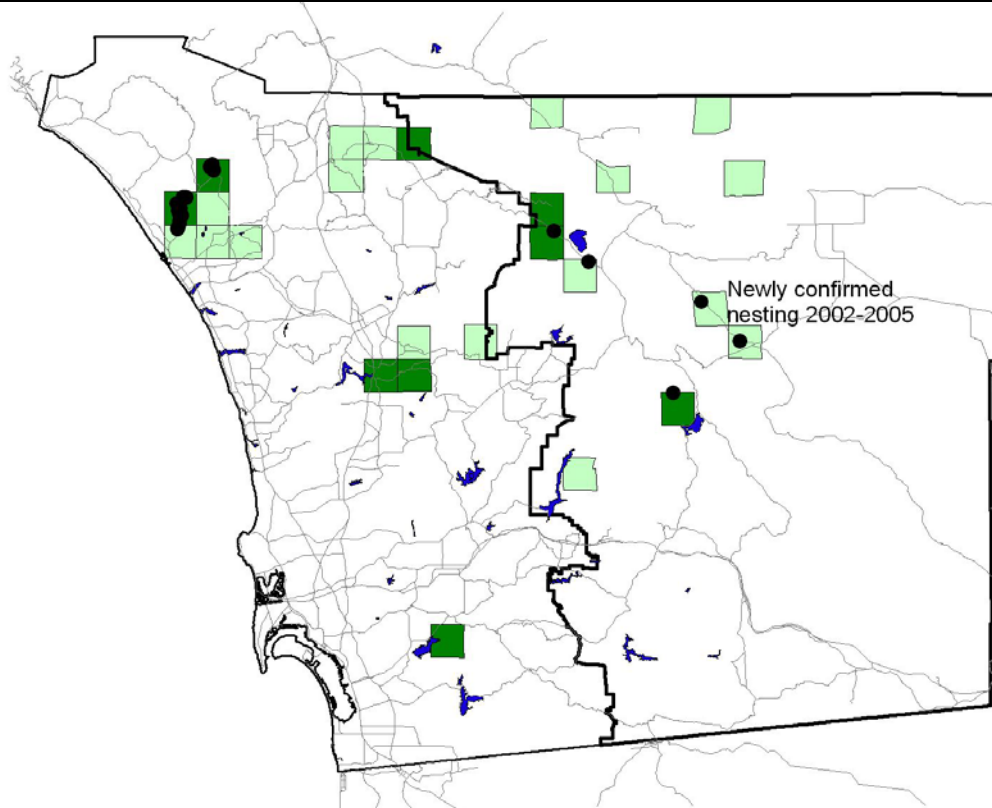
## Southwestern Willow Flycatcher

Colony of ~50 pairs along San Luis Rey River in east county MSCP area is the largest known in California. Clumped distribution in riparian woodland; summer visitor only.

Dark green: Known nesting 1997-2001

Light green: Possible nesting 1997-2001

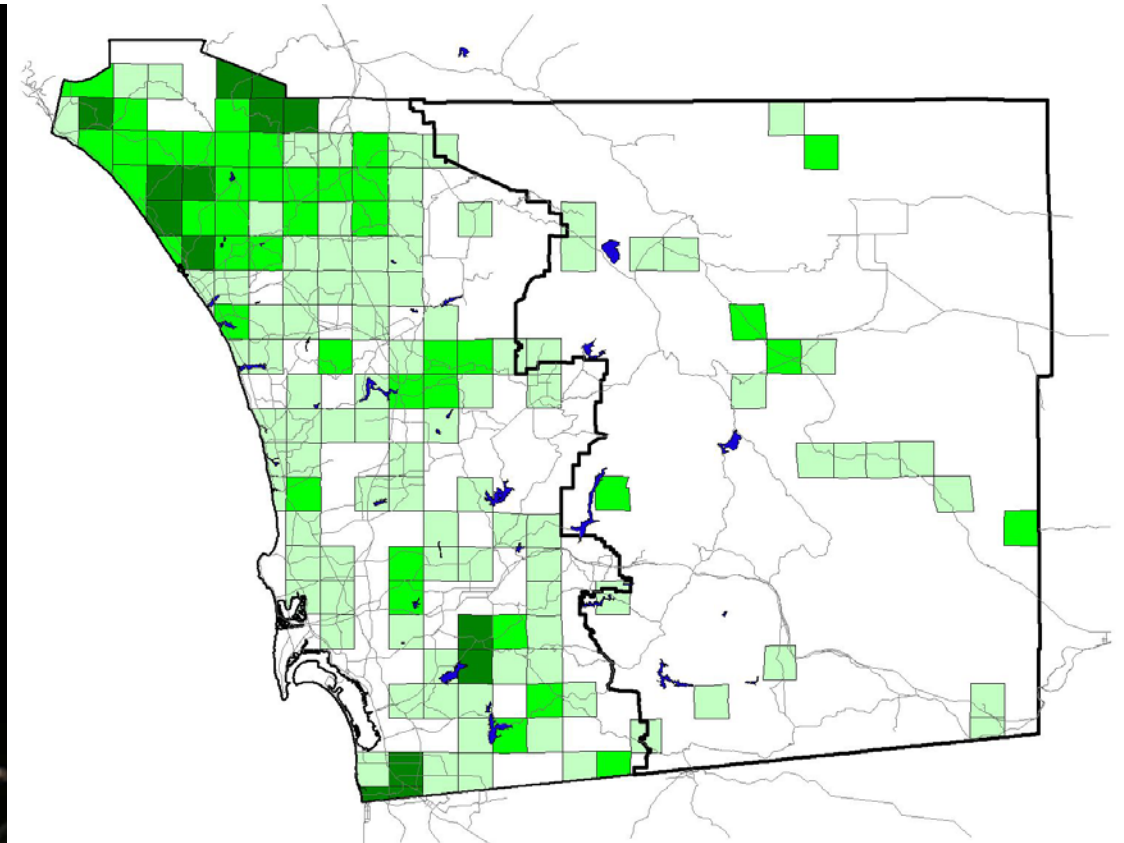
Points: Mapped locations





***Icteria virens auricollis***  
**Yellow-breasted Chat**

Riparian specialist.  
Population within east county  
MSCP area small, minor in  
comparison to that in coastal  
lowland.



Green: Breeding season  
(species absent in winter)

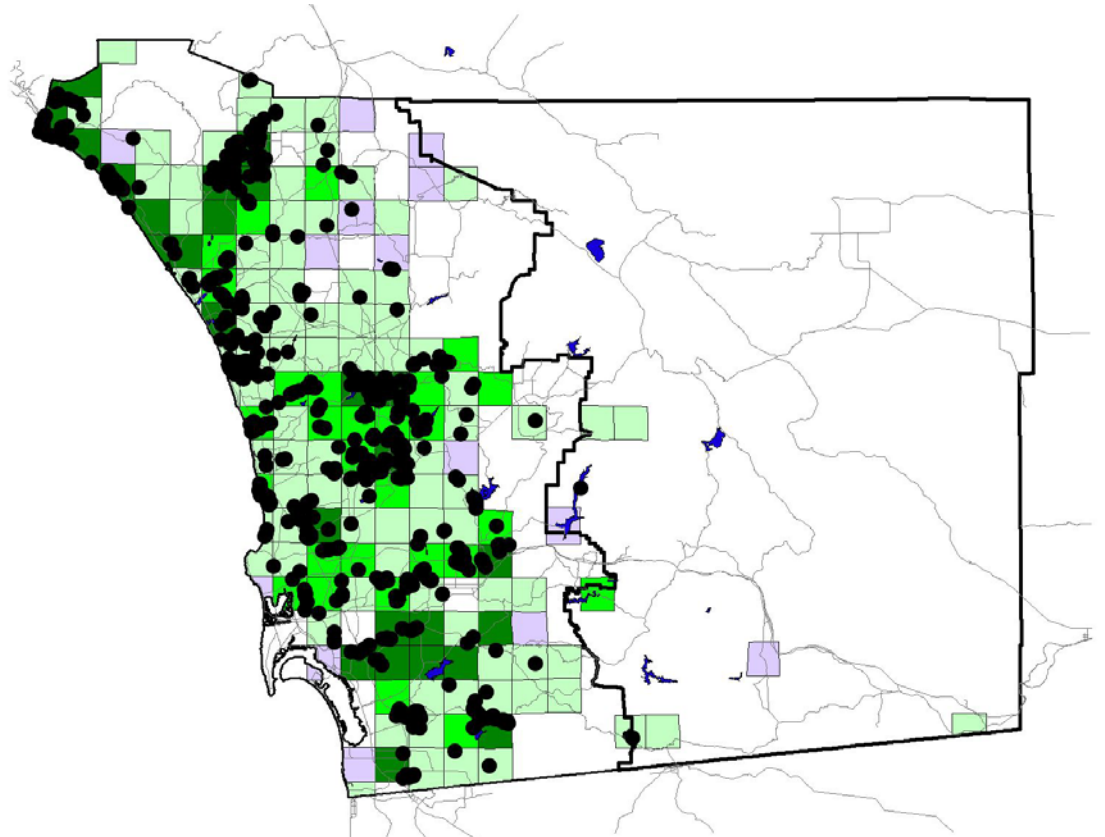
***Polioptila californica californica***  
**California Gnatcatcher**

East county MSCP area is marginal to species' range. Main site is in upper basin of San Diego River (occupation following Cedar Fire unknown). Otherwise isolated pairs or vagrants only.

Green: Breeding season

Blue: Additional winter records

Points: Mapped locations





## ***Strix occidentalis occidentalis***

## **California Spotted Owl**

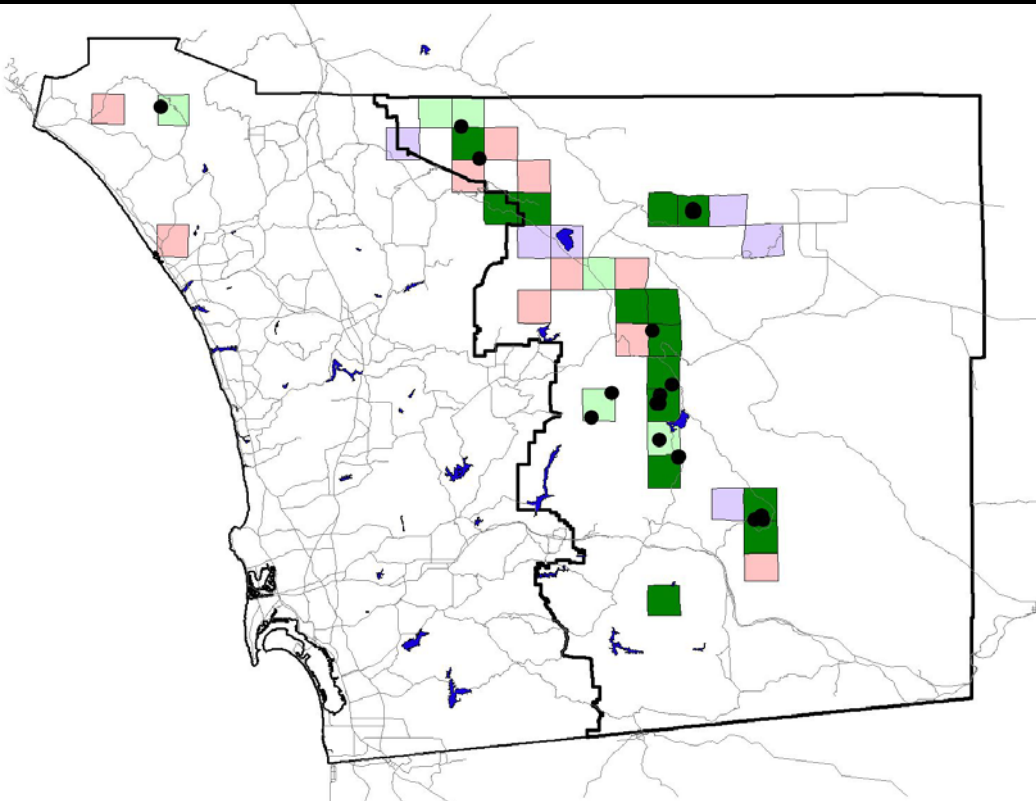
County population 25–50 pairs before Cedar Fire; probably fewer now. Almost all within east county MSCP area. Dense woodland, usually in canyons or on slopes.

Dark green: Known nesting 1997–2001.

Light green: Other sites during breeding season.

Blue: Additional winter records.

Pink: Recorded only before 1997 (probably still present at some sites)



***Vermivora luciae***

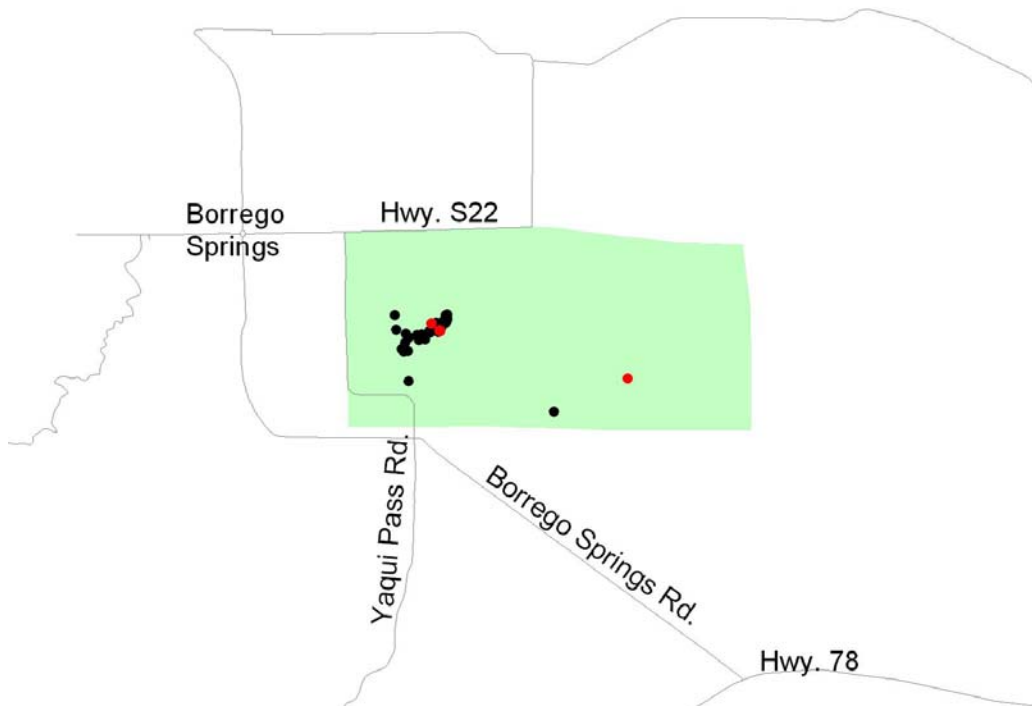
**Lucy's Warbler**

***Toxostoma crissale***

**Crissal Thrasher**

no photo ☹

Both species restricted in San Diego County to mesquite bosque in floor of Borrego Valley. Population of thrasher probably under 10 pairs, that of warbler not much greater.



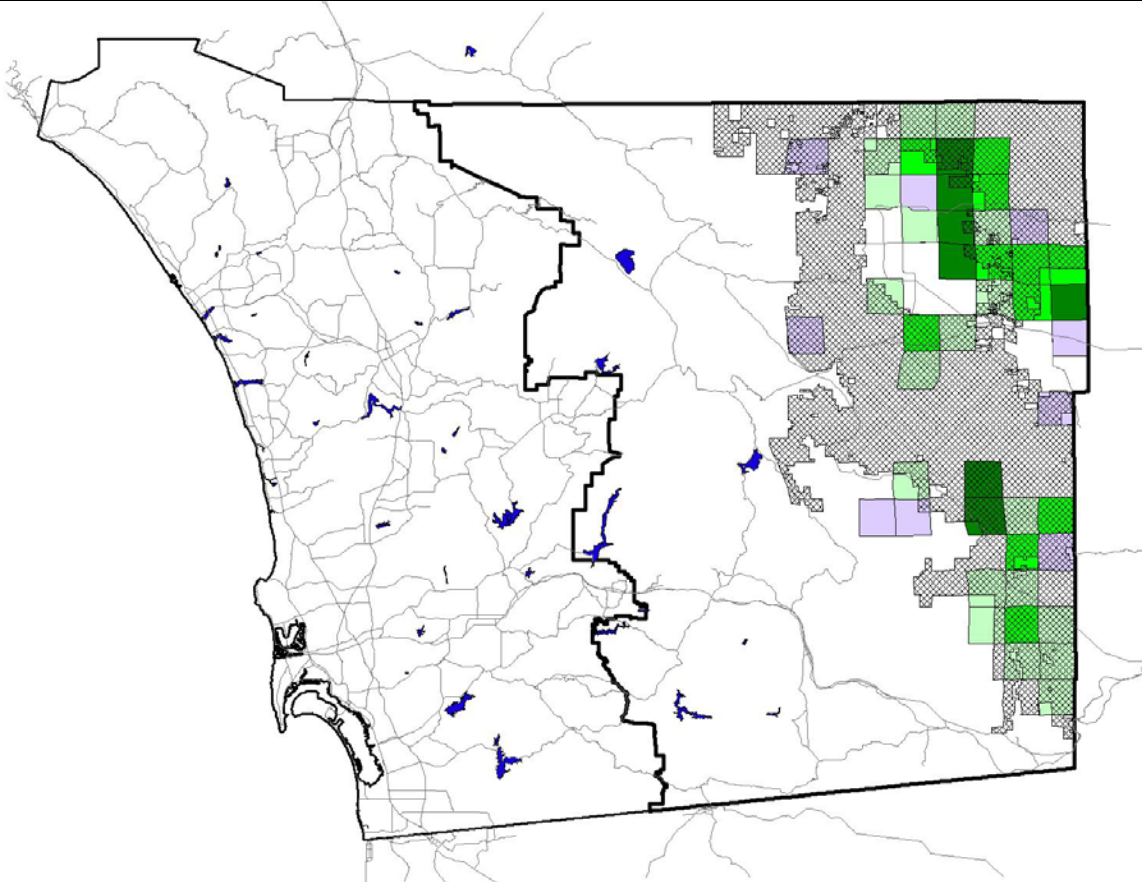
Red points: Crissal Thrasher locations

Black points: Lucy's Warbler locations



*Toxostoma lecontei lecontei*  
Le Conte's Thrasher

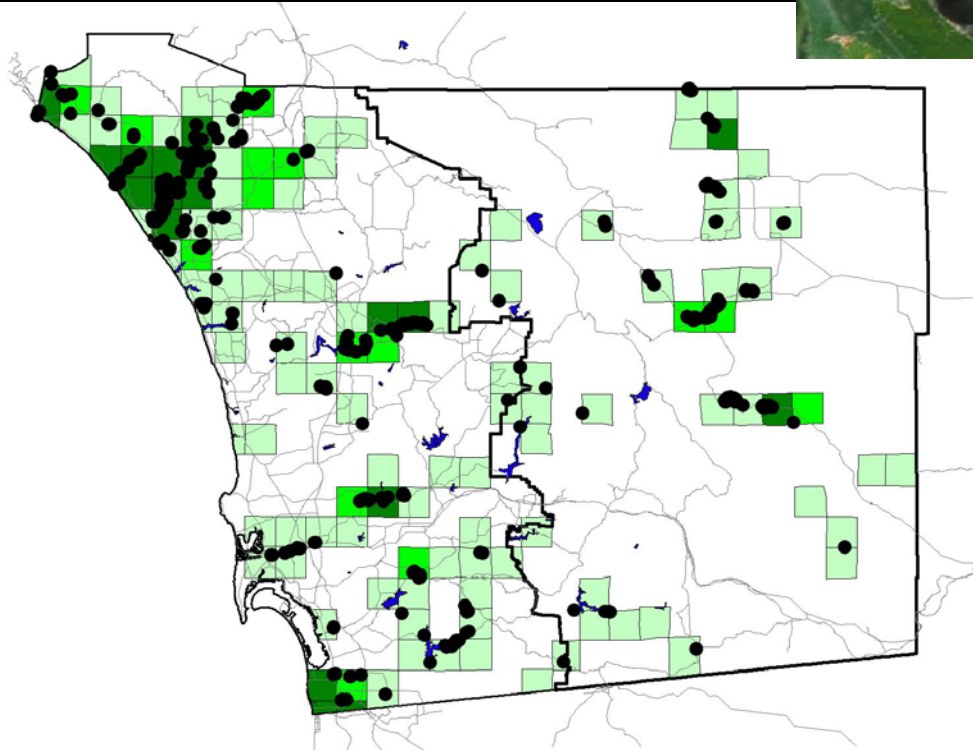
Exclusively desert species restricted to sandy soil.  
Extremely low population density.  
Some concentrations are **not** within state park.



Green: Breeding season  
Blue: Additional winter locations  
Cross-hatching: Anza-Borrego  
Desert State Park

***Vireo bellii pusillus***  
**Least Bell's Vireo**

Population in east county MSCP area approximately 150 pairs.  
Most of these are in canyons on desert slope.  
Cowbird trapping sponsored by state park has managed the vireo population for several years.



Green: Breeding season  
Points: Mapped locations

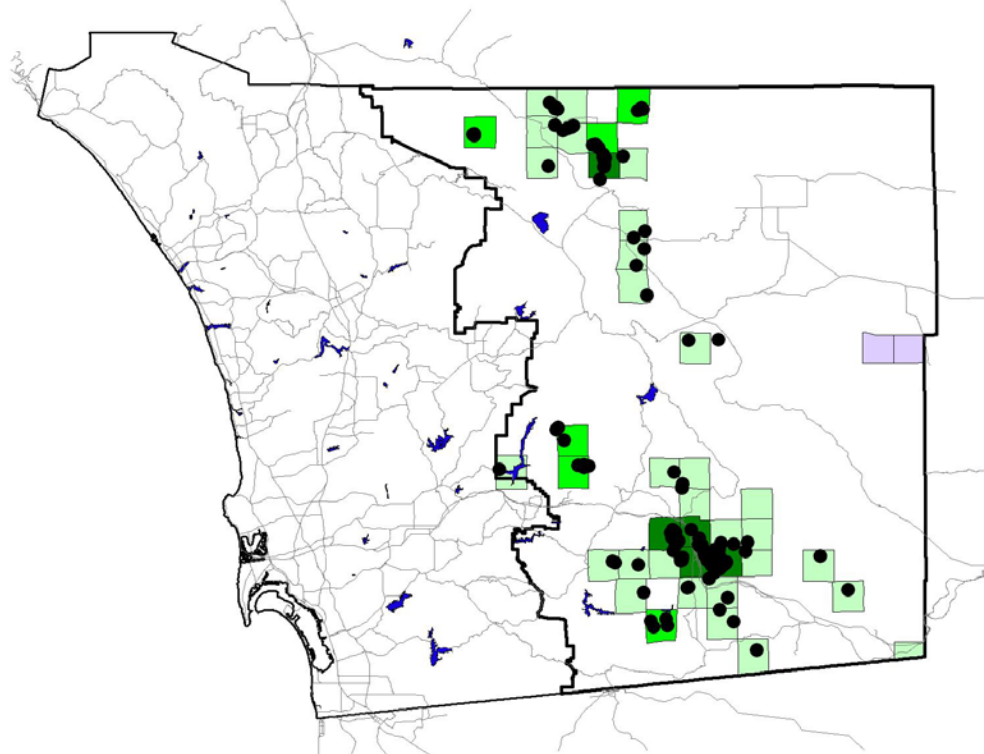


***Vireo vicinior***  
**Gray Vireo**

All of San Diego County population is within east county MSCP area.

San Diego County population, on the order of 100–150 pairs, is the largest known in California.

Only known site of species' wintering in California is within Anza–Borrego Desert State Park.



Green: Breeding season

Blue: Winter records

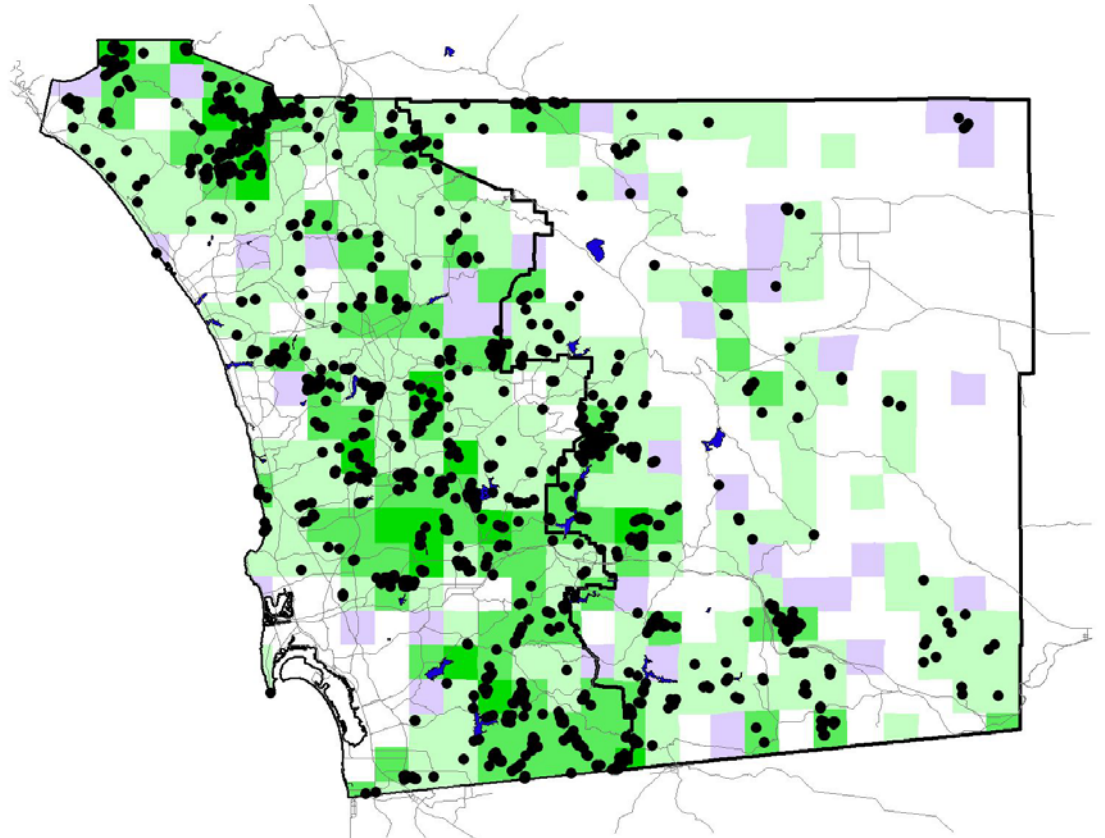
Points: Mapped locations

***Aimophila ruficeps canescens***  
**S. Calif. Rufous-crowned Sparrow**

Habitats sage scrub and rocky slopes with bunchgrass and broken chaparral.

Sensitive to habitat fragmentation. Readily recolonizes regrowth following fires, but as a sedentary species susceptible to elimination by fires.

Population in east county MSCP area substantial but less than in coastal lowland.



Green: Breeding season

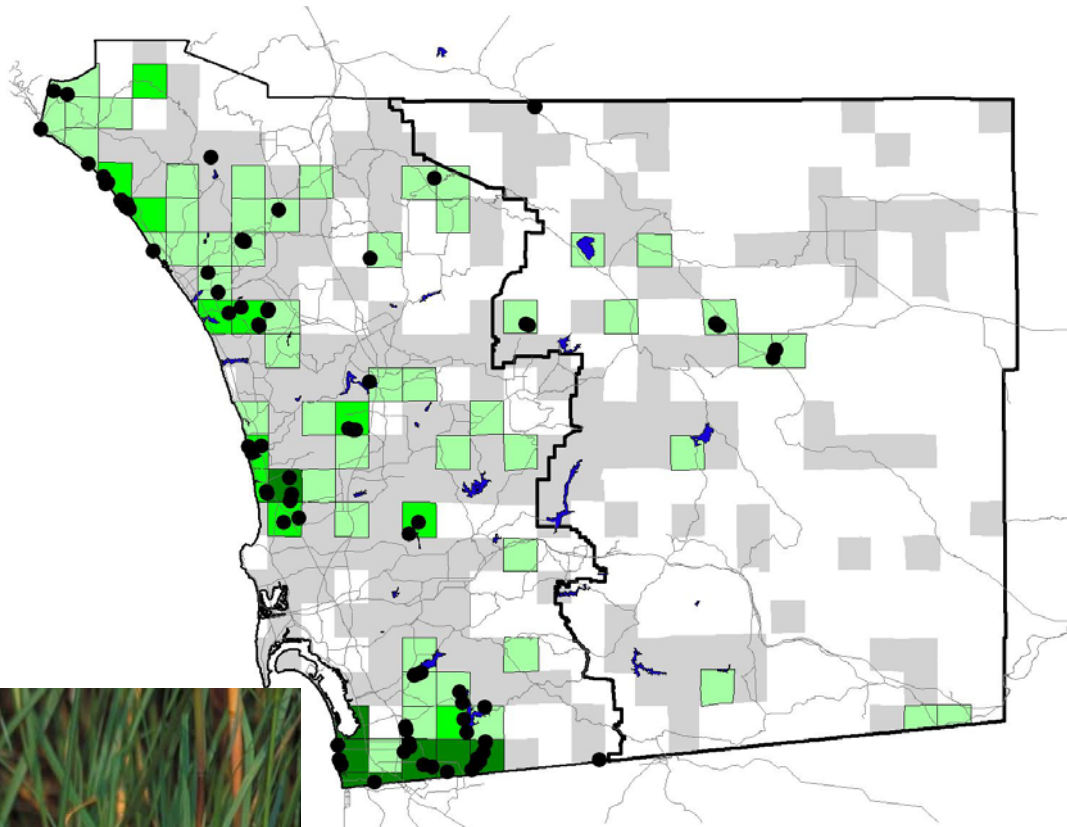
Blue: Additional winter locations (possibly resident in small numbers in most of these areas; species is nonmigratory)

Points: Mapped locations



***Circus cyaneus hudsonius***  
**Northern Harrier**

Occurs in east county MSCP area primarily as a winter visitor. Probably no more than 10 pairs nesting following wet winters, fewer in dry years. Habitat extensive grassland or semiopen country; nests on ground.



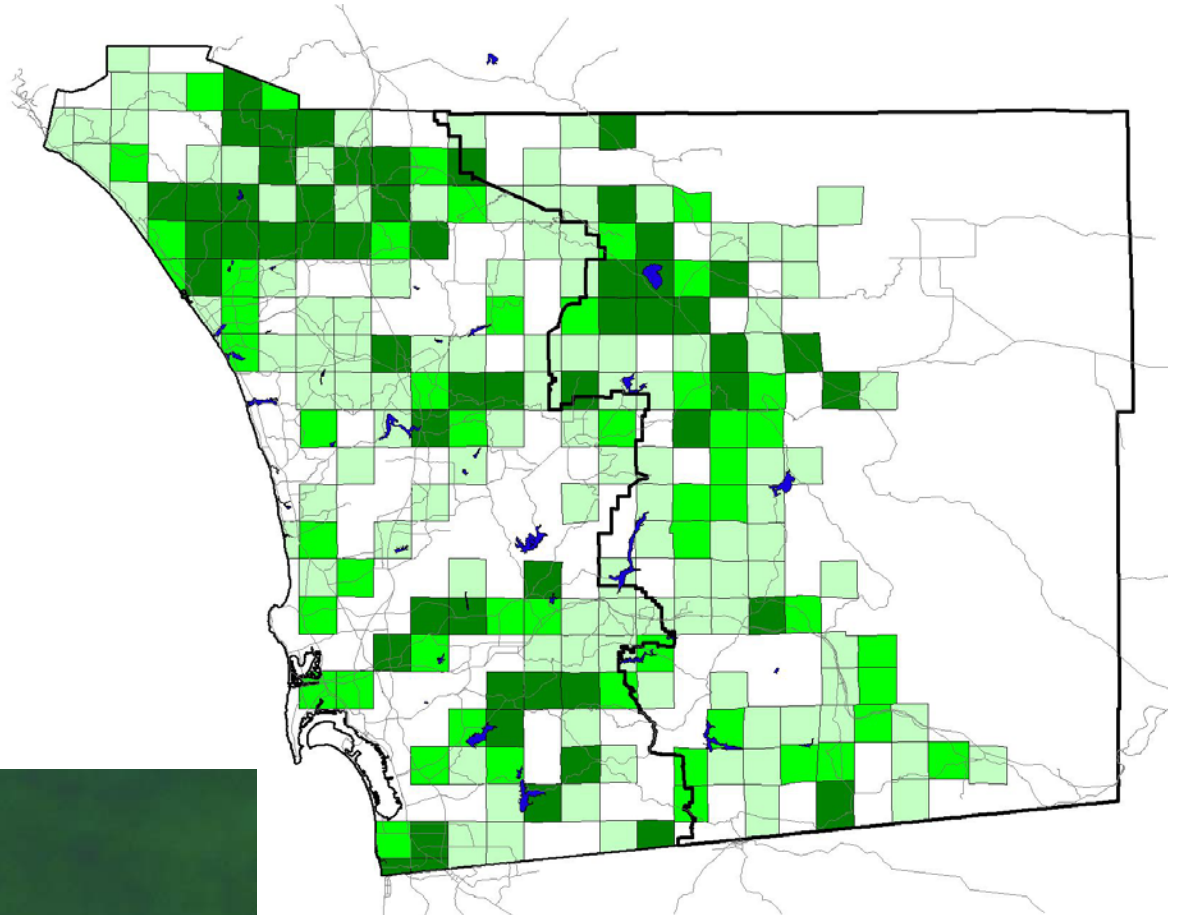
Green: Breeding season  
Gray: Additional locations of migrants and winter visitors  
Points: Mapped locations

***Dendroica petechia morcomi***  
**Yellow Warbler**

Nests in mature riparian woodland.

Has increased in tandem with Bell's Vireo, following cowbird trapping.

Population in east county MSCP area less than in coastal lowland, but upper San Luis Rey River is a major center, even in a statewide context.



Green: Known or presumed breeding.  
(Widespread in migration; records not shown.)



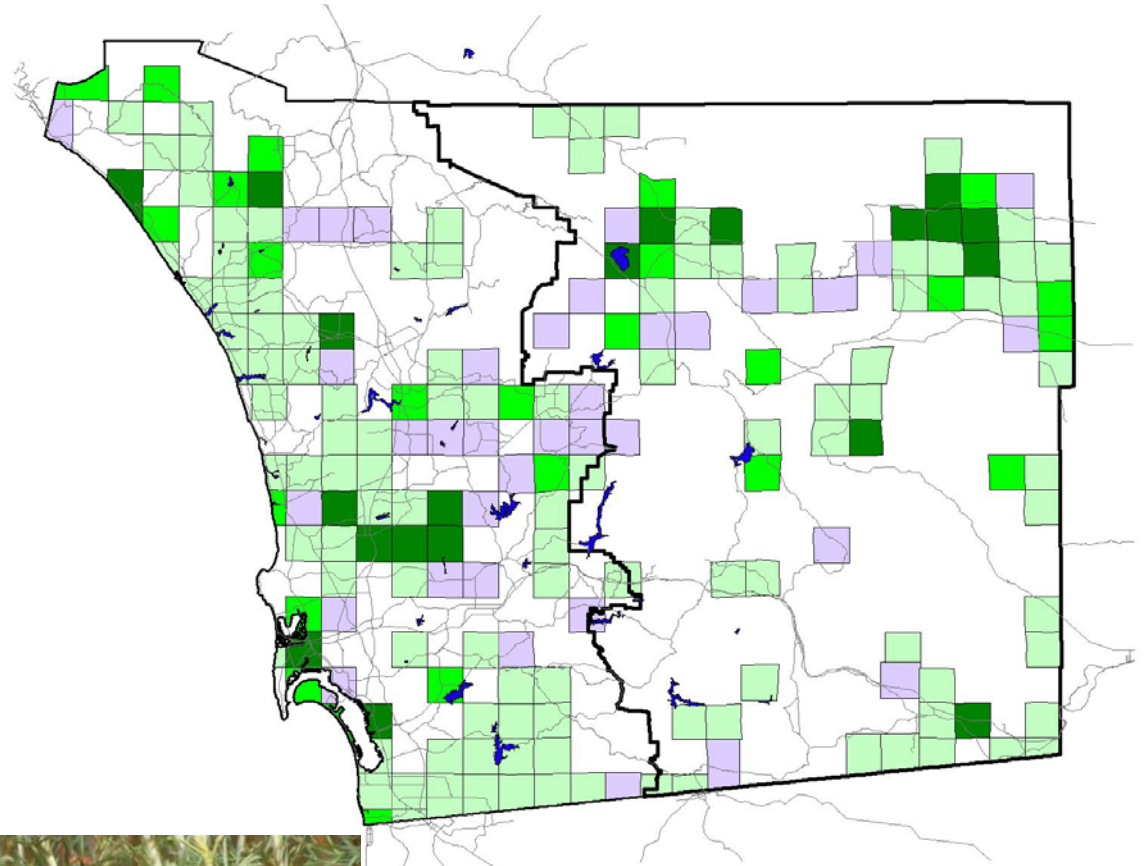


***Eremophila alpestris actia***  
**California Horned Lark**

Prefers large tracts of open country.

Colonizes clearings and disturbed areas but sensitive to habitat fragmentation.

Primary habitat in east county MSCP area is Warner Valley. Horned Larks in Borrego/Clark valleys probably another subspecies (specimens lacking).



Green: Breeding season

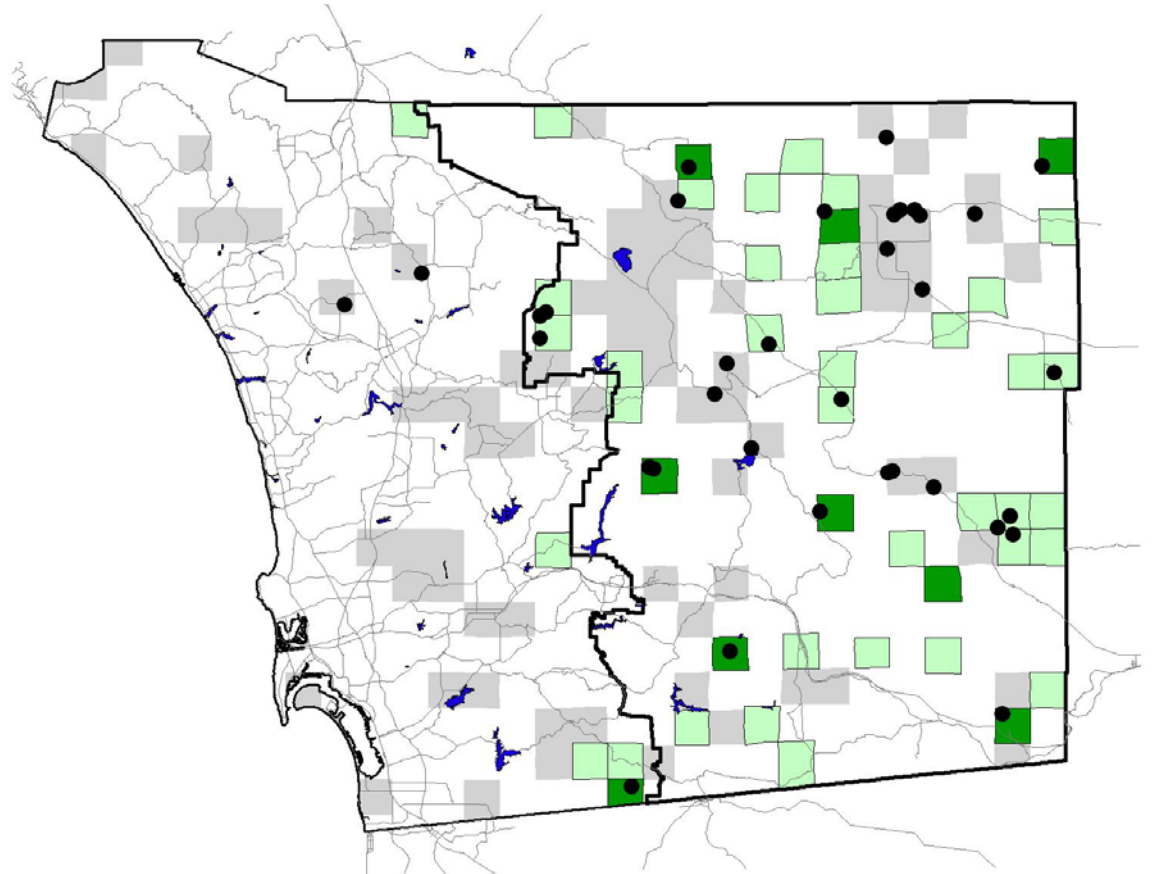
Blue: Additional winter records

***Falco mexicanus***  
**Prairie Falcon**

All but 1 or 2 of San Diego County's population of 20–30 pairs is within east county MSCP area.

Nests on cliffs and bluffs; forages widely, mainly over desert and grassland.

Conservation issues are disturbance of nest sites and loss of foraging habitat.



Dark green: Known nesting  
Light green: Possible nesting  
Gray: Migrants, winter visitors, and birds foraging away from nesting habitat  
Points: Mapped locations



## *Piranga rubra cooperi* Summer Tanager

Restricted to mature riparian woodland.

Species has spread west from historic range in spite of being decimated within that historic range along the Colorado River.

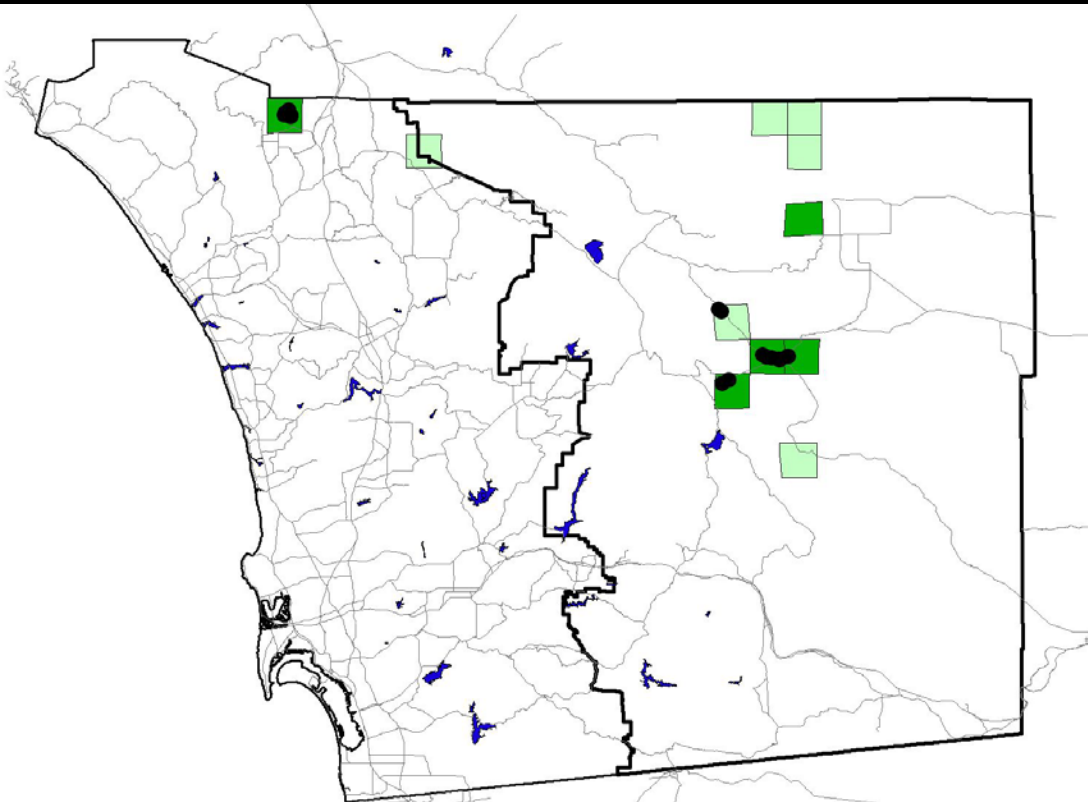
Probably colonized San Diego County in 1990s; first confirmed nesting in 2000

Population in east county MSCP area about 12–14 pairs.

Dark green: Nesting confirmed.

Light green: Nesting possible.

Points: Mapped locations.



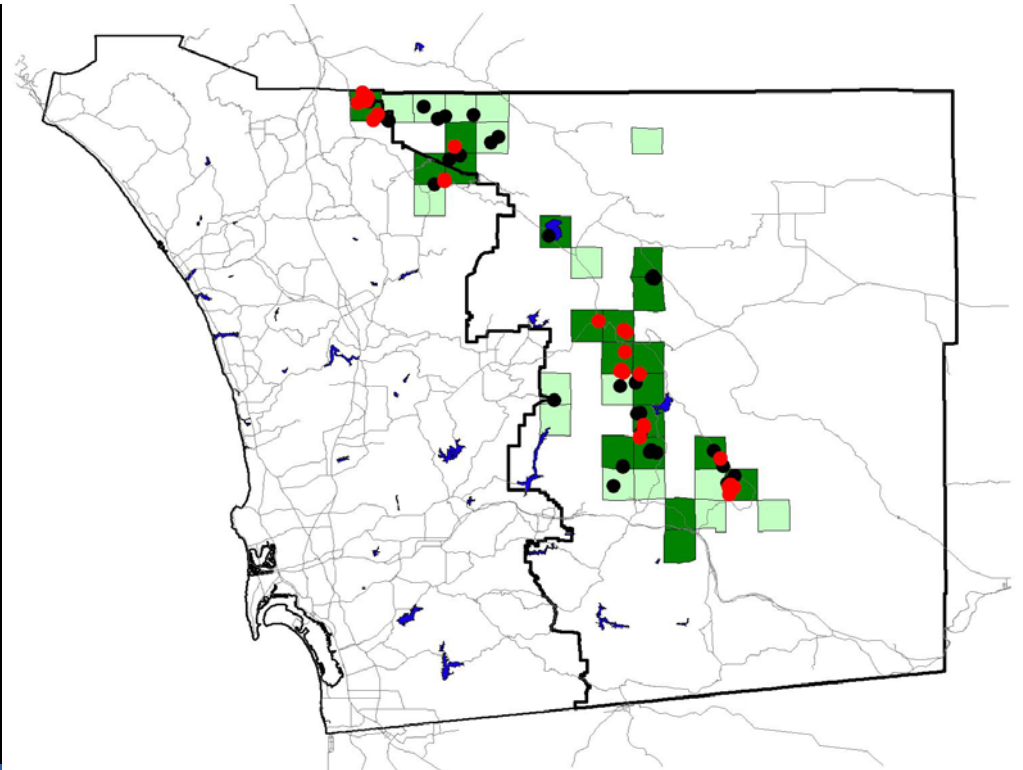
*Progne subis subis*  
**Purple Martin**

Nest sites scattered in large isolated dead trees, occasionally in woodpecker holes in telephone poles.

Most of county population is within east county MSCP area.

San Diego County population is substantial in a statewide context.

Primary negative factor thought to be competition for nest sites with European Starlings.



Dark green: Known nesting  
1997–2001

Light green: Possible nesting  
1997–2001

Red points: Mapped nesting  
locations

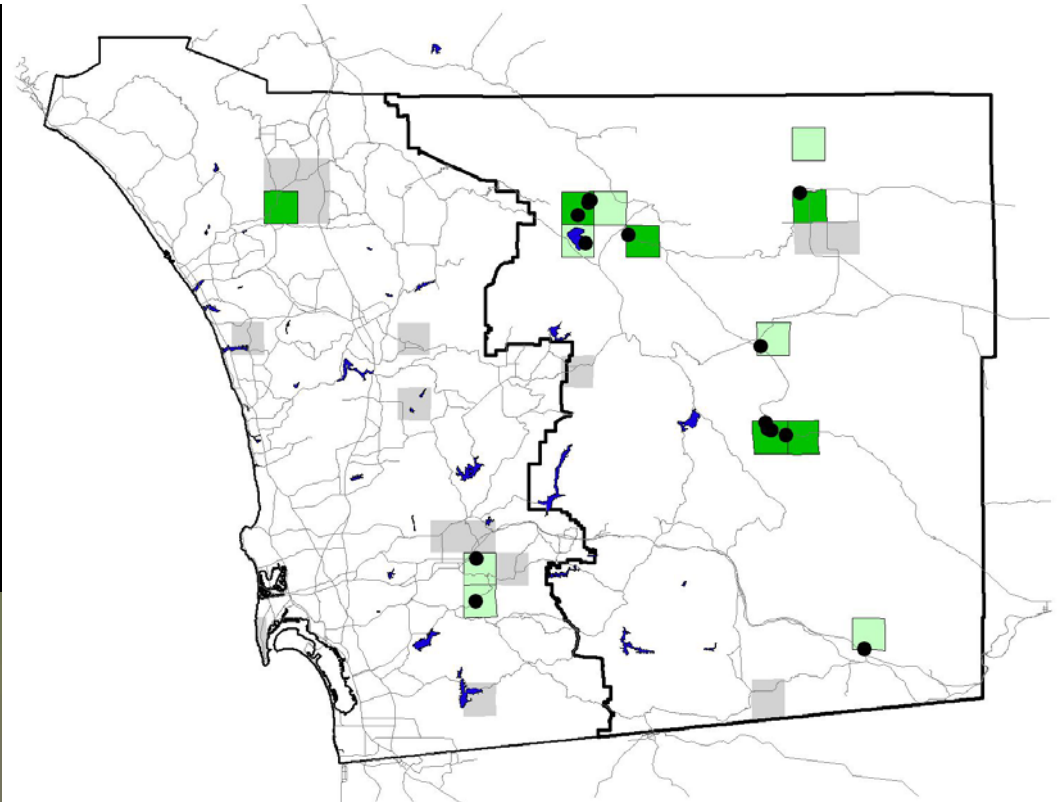
Black points: Mapped locations of  
observations other than  
nesting



***Pyrocephalus rubinus flammeus***  
**Vermilion Flycatcher**

Population in east county MSCP area  
10 pairs or fewer. Probably irregular  
at most sites.

Natural habitat open riparian woodland  
but now more often in man-made  
habitats.



Dark green: Nesting confirmed  
Light green: Nesting possible  
Gray: Migrants and winter visitors  
Points: Mapped locations